

Youth Newsletter

January 2005

Children, Youth Busy During Christmas Season

Between visitation to our nursing home residents and shut-ins, and a number of Christmas-related activities, Bethlehem's youth have been quite busy this December.

On Sunday, December 5, the Pioneer Clubs visited Nansemond Pointe nursing home to spread some Christmas cheer.

Accompanied by Terese Neblett on piano, the children sang a number of familiar Christmas carols to a gathering crowd of residents.

Then, the children and their leaders visited the rooms of each resident on our prayer list. During their visit, the children gave each resident a miniature Norfolk Island pine, and personally decorated it with candy canes while in the resident's room.

Later that night, the Junior and Senior High youth donned costumes and staged a Living Nativity Scene. Passerbys were greeted by the sight of shepherds, wise men, Mary, Joseph, and an angel as they tended to the baby Jesus lying in his manger.

On Sunday, December 12, after over a month of practice, the children performed their annual Christmas Play.

During the play, three girls, played by Bethany Cauliette, Tori Tarkington, and Ginger Tarkington, looked for the spirit of Christmas in presents, Grandma's Christmas dinner, and various other places, but came up empty each and every time. Not until they looked to the baby Jesus, born in a manger in the town of Bethlehem, did they find the true meaning of Christmas.

YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULES

SCOOTERS • VOYAGERS • PATHFINDERS

- January 2** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
- January 9** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
- January 16** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
- January 23** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
- January 30** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
- February 6** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
Souper Bowl Sunday
youth are asked to bring a non-perishable food item for the church's Food Pantry

ALPHAS • OMEGAS

- January 2** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
- January 9** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
- January 16** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
- January 23** Fundraising Luncheon, 12:00noon-1:30pm
No Regular Meeting
- January 30** Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
- February 4-6** SnowBlast 2K5 Ski Trip, time and details TBA
Souper Bowl Sunday
youth are asked to bring a non-perishable food item for the church's Food Pantry
- February 6** **No Regular Meeting**

For more detailed information about your group's schedule, please contact your group's leaders.

Following the play, the children and their families enjoyed a reception and a special visit with Santa.

Then, on Tuesday, December 21, the Alpha Youth Group visited the residents at Nansemond Pointe nursing home and delivered the church's Angel Tree gifts that church members had carefully

(continued on Page 2, **Christmas Season**)

(Christmas Season, continued from Page 1)

wrapped and left for them in the sanctuary.

Following the nursing home visit, the Alpha youth enjoyed dinner and rode through a few neighborhoods, enjoying the Christmas lights, before returning to church.

Lastly, on Thursday, December 23, the Omega Youth Group visited our shut-ins and delivered their Angel Tree gifts before enjoying an old-fashioned night of Christmas caroling and a floating dinner.

At 5:00pm, the group started at the home of Danny and Leigh Ann Graham, where they enjoyed hors d'ouvres and fellowship. Then, the teens caroled at various homes in the Oak Ridge neighborhood before ending up at the home of Johnny and Becke West at about 7:30pm, where they enjoyed dinner together.

Special thanks to all who supported the youth and their activities in 2004. We are looking forward to another great year in 2005!

**Sunday, February 6 is
Souper Bowl Sunday!**

Special Regular Meeting time

12:15pm-2:00pm

(following Morning Worship)

Lunch provided

**please bring a non-perishable food
item to help restock Bethlehem's Food
Pantry for the needy in our community**

Be sure to visit

<http://www.bccyouth.org>

for the latest information about
The Youth Groups at Bethlehem!

Youth Director's Corner

by David Salerno

As we begin a new year, two changes to the Church Constitution were recently passed that directly affect the Youth Fellowship program here at Bethlehem.

First, a new Youth Advisory Committee was formed.

And, secondly, a new Youth Director position was created, to replace the role of Youth Coordinator.

Last year, the Board of Christian Education recommended that the Youth Coordinator and the responsibilities thereof be under the direction of the Associate Pastor.

This recommendation was referred to the Constitution Committee by the Executive Board,

and the Constitution Committee drafted and recommended these two Constitutional changes.

These changes to the Constitution were approved by the Executive Board and passed by the October Church Conference.

The role of the new Youth Advisory Committee is to assist and advise the Youth Director in planning and advancing the youth program, as well as reviewing and approving policy, literature, curriculum, and materials used.

This committee is also involved in leadership training and summer camp availability, as well as reviewing and approving youth expenditures and the annual budget request.

The responsibility of the Youth Director is to advise, direct, and carry out the total youth program, to include working with the new Youth

(continued on Page 3, Youth Director's Corner)

(Youth Director's Corner, continued from Page 2)

Advisory Committee and obtaining their approval of policy, literature, curriculum, materials used, leadership training, summer camp, youth expenditures, and the annual budget request.

The Youth Director no longer reports to the Board of Christian Education, but instead chairs the Youth Advisor Committee, and will also serve as a member of the Executive Board.

Just a few weeks ago, the new Youth Advisory Committee held its first meeting.

The Youth Advisory Committee consists of:

- David Salerno, Youth Director (chairperson),
- Jonathan Palmer, Pastor,
- Les Stallings, Chairperson of the Board of Deacons,
- Lloyd Gatling, Chairperson of the Board of Christian Education,
- Bert Morris, Chairperson of the Board of Finance,
- John Driver, President of the Senior High Youth Fellowship,

and four church members nominated by the Church Moderator:

- Ray Johnson,
- Robert Lewis,
- Brenda Oliver (recording secretary), and
- Denise Smith (assistant recording secretary).

Although much of the first meeting was dedicated to various administrative tasks, such as electing a recording secretary, defining a quorum, setting our meeting schedule, and much more, there was also a great amount of productive discussion on various topics concerning our youth fellowship program.

The need for a youth handbook was discussed to detail in writing various policies that may be in place, but might not necessarily be well documented. It was recommended that the Youth Director form a committee to create this new Youth Handbook, and this process is currently under way.

The topic of summer camp was also discussed,

and it was recommended that a committee be formed to investigate the options available and present them to the Youth Advisory Committee.

Even the Youth Web Site and the Youth Newsletter was discussed. It was suggested that student-written articles, birthdays, and student profiles might be added to the newsletter to increase participation and student interest. These features will be phased in over the next few issues.

Many of you already know my vision for a complete well-rounded youth program that combines fellowship, service, and education.

I feel that in general the committee shares that vision, and that we all want to have the best youth fellowship program possible.

As we go forward, we should remember the successes we have already enjoyed. Over the past several years, several families have joined our church family, based in large part on the experience their children had in our youth fellowship program. In addition, a number of families who attend other churches, or who attend no church at all, have joined us at one time or another for our Sunday night program.

We must not forget that our Sunday night youth fellowship program is a large part of our outreach effort to the local community, and that often youth who would not initially attend a church service or Bible study will often come to a youth fellowship meeting without hesitation.

Statistics reveal that over 70% of families choose to join a church based not on their own experience, but on the experience of their children. That is a powerful statement as to the outreach potential of a youth program.

Certainly, we should do all we can to build on the successes we have enjoyed as a youth fellowship program. But, in the process, we should also take care not to abandon or radically alter those very things which have led to these successes.

We should look to the future with much anticipation and optimism, but also with an equal measure of caution, foresight, and prayer.

Until next time, God bless,



The Youth Groups at Bethlehem Christian Church
Youth Group Schedule
Winter/Spring 2005 • updated 12-21-04

January 2	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
January 9	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
January 16	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
January 23	Alphas/Omegas Fundraising Luncheon, 12:00noon-1:30pm Pioneer Clubs Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm No Regular Meeting for Alphas/Omegas
January 30	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
February 4-6	Alphas/Omegas SnowBlast 2K5, time & details TBA
February 6	Pioneer Clubs Regular Meeting, 12:15pm-2:00pm <i>Souper Bowl Sunday</i> <i>youth are asked to bring non-perishable food items for Bethlehem's Food Pantry</i> No Regular Meeting for Alphas/Omegas
February 13	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
February 20	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
February 25-26	Alphas/Omegas World Vision 30 Hour Famine, time & details TBA
February 27	Pioneer Clubs Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm No Regular Meeting for Alphas/Omegas
March 6	Family Skating Party, 5:15pm-7:15pm <i>Smithfield Skate LTD</i>
March 13	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
March 20	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
March 26	Alphas/Omegas Easter Lily Mission, time TBA
March 27	No Regular Meeting <i>Easter Sunday</i>
April 3	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
April 10	Youth Revival, time & details TBA
April 17	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
April 24	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
May 1	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
May 8	No Regular Meeting <i>Mother's Day</i>
May 15	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
May 22	Regular Meeting, 5:30pm-7:15pm
May 29	No Regular Meeting <i>Memorial Day Weekend</i>
June 5	Youth Group Cook-Out, time TBA
August 28	Opening Activity, time & details TBA

Regular Meeting Schedule

5:30pm	Dinner, Graham Hall
6:00pm	Club Time
7:15pm	Dismissal

Each club may schedule activities, mission projects, fundraisers, and/or trips. These events are in addition to this schedule, and are independently scheduled by the individual club leaders. These events may occasionally replace a scheduled regular meeting for your club. Seasonal parties or activities may also be scheduled by the Youth Coordinator. Your club's leaders will keep you informed about all upcoming events for your club.